

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 236569 TOSEC 270645

NODIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM CHARGE

FOLLOWING REPEAT CAIRO 12925 ACTION SECSTATE 23 SEP 76.

QUOTE: S E C R E T CAIRO 12925

NODIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM CHARGE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR US LE EG

SUBJ: MESSAGE TO FAHMY RE LEBANESE DEVELOPMENTS

REF: STATE 234221

SUMMARY: I DELIVERED YOUR ORAL MESSAGE TO FAHMY THIS MORNING AS INSTRUCTED REFTEL. FAHMY READ IT CAREFULLY AND THEN COMMENTED THAT HE WAS GRATEFUL TO HAVE THIS INFORMATION. HE THEN REVIEWED AT SOME LENGTH THE EFFORTS EGYPT AND HE PERSONALLY HAD BEEN MAKING TO RESOLVE LEBANESE CRISIS. FAHMY URGES THAT PRESIDENT FORD SEND A MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT SARKIS OFFERING USG SUPPORT. END SUMMARY

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1. AFTER READING YOUR ORAL MESSAGE AND EXPRESSING

APPRECIATION FOR IT, FAHMY COMMENTED THAT HE BELIEVED THE CONTACTS EGYPT HAD BEEN HAVING WITH VARIOUS LEBANESE LEADERS INCLUDING SARKIS HAD PERHAPS BROUGHT ABOUT A TURNING POINT IN THE AREA. HE EXPECTS THAT SHORTLY AFTER GAIRAM FEAST IS OVER A SIX-POWER MINI-SUMMIT (EGYPT, SYRIA, SAUDI ARABIA, KUWAIT, SARKIS AND ARAFAT) WILL TAKE PLACE; PERHAPS IF THAT IS SUCCESSFUL THERE WILL THEN BE A FULL ARAB SUMMIT IN CAIRO. THESE EVENTS AND CONTINUING EGYPTIAN CONTACTS ARE LIKELY TO PREVENT HIS GOING TO US, MUCH AS HE WOULD LIKE TO MEET WITH PRESIDENT FORD AND YOU.

2. EGYPTIAN CONTACTS WITH THE LEBANESE LEADERS OVER PAST FEW WEEKS HAVE BEEN USEFUL IN CLARIFYING VARIOUS PARTIES' VIEWS. AS RESULT LEBANESE LEADERS, EVEN INCLUDING PIERRE GEMAYEL, SUPPORT EGYPTIAN EFFORTS. SARKIS MEETING WITH SADAT WAS LENGTHY AND VERY GOOD . FOR OUR OWN PRIVATE INFORMATION SARKIS ASKED SASAT FOR "POLITICAL AND MATERIAL SUPPORT" AND SADAT HAD AGREED TO GRANT IT. EGYPT HAS CONTINUED IN CONTACT WITH SARKIS SINCE HIS DEPARTURE. IN ADDITION, JUMBLATT AND EDDE WOULD BE COMING FOR FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH THE EGYPTIANS.

3. FAHMY INFORMED ME THAT PRESIDENT SADAT HAD RECEIVED CARTE BLANCHE FROM ARAFAT UNDER WHICH ARAFAT WOULD AGREE TO ANY EGYPTIAN PROPOSAL PROVIDED THAT PRESIDENT SADAT GUARANTEED IT. THIS INFORMATION HAD BEEN PASSED TO SARKIS WHEN HE WAS HERE.

4. THE MINI-SUMMIT, IF IT TAKES PLACE, IS TO DISCUSS ONLY LEBANON AND NOT SUCH MATTERS AS THE SINAI AGREEMENT. FAHMY HOPES FOR PROGRESS IN BRINGING AN ACCORD BETWEEN THE PARTIES. IF THIS AHPPENS, FAHMY WILL NOT TRY TO PORTRAY IT AS A VICTORY FOR EGYPT. THE SYRIANS HAVE BEEN EMBARRASSED BY FAHMY'S INITIATIVE AND THE SYRIAN PRESS HAS BEEN CARRYING NASTY EDITORIALS ABOUT SADAT'S REFERENDUM AND HAVE EVEN CLAIMED THAT EGYPT SABOTAGED THE CHTOURA MEETINGS IN ADVANCE BY WHAT IT TOLD LEBANESE LEADERS. FAHMY
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SAID THIS WAS OF COURSE NOT TRUE AND SYRIANS HAD IN FACT CAUSED BREAKDOWN OF THESE TALKS BY INSISTING UPON PALESTINIANS WITHDRAWAL FROM THEMETN AND THEIR REPLACEMENT BY SYRIAN FORCES. PALESTINIANS HAD BEEN WILLING TO WITHDRAW ON CONDITION THAT AREA BE TAKEN OVER BY CHRISTIAN OR ARAB LEAGUE FORCES, BUT NOT SYRIANS. THERE HAD ALSO BEEN MORE FUNDAMENTAL DIS-AGREEMENTS AT CHTOURA, THOUGH HE DID NOT GO INTO THEM.

5. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION ABOUT REPORTS THAT THE EGYPTIAN TROOPS WOULD PARTICIPATE IN THE ARAB LEAGUE FORCES IN LEBANON, FAHMY REPLIED THAT EGYPT HAD BEEN ASKED TO SUPPLY TROOPS BY MANY OF THE PARTIES, EVEN INCLUDING SYRIANS, BUT HE DID NOT INTEND TO AGREE TO THIS REQUEST.

6. PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE. WITH REGARD TO WHAT USG COULD DO TO HELP IN LEBANON SITUATION, FAHMY URGED THAT PRESIDENT FORD SEND MESSAGE TO SARKIS TO SHOW THAT US IS READY TO HELP. MESSAGE SHOULD ENDORSE SARKIS' ASSUMPTION OF THE PRESIDENCY, URGE CONCILIATION AMONG THE PARTIES, AND SHOULD ALSO ENCOURAGE MINI-SUMMIT MEETING TO RESOLVE LEBANESE CRISIS. FAHMY (FORMING IN HIS OWN MIND MESSAGE WE SHOULD SEND) CONTINUED THAT IT SHOULD NOT CONTAIN OFFER TO SEND MILITARY CONTINGENTS BUT SHOULD PROMISE FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR LEBANON. MESSAGE ALSO SHOULD NOT CONTAIN ANY REFERENCE TO PALESTINIANS, AS THIS WOULD CERTAINLY LEAK. MESSAGE HE HAD IN MIND SHOULD NOT BE PUBLISHED BUT FACT OF IT HAVING BEEN SENT SHOULD BE LEAKED WITHOUT GIVING ITS SUBSTANCE, EXCEPT THAT IT SUPPORTED SARKIS.

7. FINALLY, FAHMY SAID WE SHOULD SEND AN AMBASSADOR TO LEBANON, PERHAPS A RETURN BY AMBASSADOR SEELYE. HE FELT IT IMPORTANT THAT WE HAVE A SENIOR MAN IN BEIRUT, DESPITE THE ACKNOWLEDGED PERSONAL DANGERS.

8. COMMENT: FAHMY WAS CALM AND REFLECTIVE DURING THE ONE AND ONE HALF HOUR MEETING, WHICH ALSO COVERED OTHER SUBJECTS REPORTED SEPTELS. WHILE HE STILL HOPES THAT HIS CONTINUING ROUND OF DISCUSSIONS
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WITH LEBANESE AND PALESTINIAN FIGURES WILL PRODUCE AN EGYPTIAN RESOLUTION IN LEBANON, I THOUGHT HE SEEMED RELATIVELY LESS CONFIDENT THAN AT OUR LAST MEETING ON THE SUBJECT. HE STILL DENIGRATES SYRIAN INFLUENCE AND SHOWS NO SIGNS OF BEING WILLING TO ALLOW A RECONCILIATION BETWEEN EGYPT AND SYRIA.

9. WE UNDERSTAND FROM OTHER SOURCES THAT EGYPT'S INSISTENCE ON PARTICIPATION BY SARKIS AND ARAFAT HAS FOR TIME BEING DELAYED CONVENING OF MINI-SUMMIT, SINCE SYRIA, SAUDI ARABIA AND KUWAIT WANT TO START WITH A FOUR -POWER SUMMIT WHICH COULD LATER BE EXPANDED TO INCLUDE ARAFAT AND SARKIS.

10. I WAS STRUCK BY FACT THAT FAHMY DID NOT

COMPLAIN ABOUT US ROLE IN LEBANON AND OUR ALLEGED

COLLUSION WITH SYRIA AND ISRAELIS, AS HE HAS TO
AMBASSADOR EILTS IN THE PAST. I THINK YOUR MESSAGE
LED HIM INTO MORE CONSTRUCTIVE THINKING ABOUT
HOW USG COULD BE HELPFUL.

MATTHEWS

UNQUOTE ROBINSON

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